

How is NH Collection Dubai The Palm saving 50,000 meals a year ?

Located on Dubai's iconic Palm Jumeirah, NH Collection Dubai The Palm is Renowned for its blend of world-class hospitality and commitment to sustainability, the hotel features five culinary outlets, with Maiora—its all-day dining restaurant—at the heart of its operations. Within just eight months of implementing Winnow, Maiora achieved a 26% reduction in food waste, saving 50,000 meals a year.

The Chef behind the Change

Ajinkya Soundankar, Executive Chef at NH Collection Dubai The Palm, brings years of global culinary experience. His career has spanned New York, Las Vegas, Thailand, India, and the Middle East, where he cultivated a deep appreciation for both traditional and innovative food practices. Early exposure in his family's pastry business also rooted his respect for ingredients that later evolved into his philosophy of responsible cooking.

All Day Dining

At Maiora, the scale of operations posed a major challenge. Breakfast service alone often saw overproduction of dishes like scrambled eggs and sautéed vegetables, leading to 5–7kg of daily waste during low-traffic periods. With over 1,200 daily covers, this was both financially and environmentally unsustainable.

“

When you look at the images, and then at your numbers, you realize—this could have been done better. That's when you start to ask the right questions.

Ajinkya Soundankar, Executive Chef
NH Collection Dubai The Palm



Waste reduction results

-  26% reduction in food waste by weight
-  19.8 tons of food waste saved annually
-  85.2 tons CO₂e emissions avoided annually
-  250,000 AED in annualized savings
-  50,000 meals saved annually

Data-Driven Decisions

Daily performance reviews were driven by Chemes, the hotel's Assistant Hygiene Coordinator & Winnow Ambassador.

“Every morning, we sit down and ask: what went wrong yesterday? We track everything—breakfast, lunch, dinner, product by product.”

— Chemes, Assistant Hygiene Coordinator & Winnow Ambassador

Chemes translated data into meaningful action, reporting trends, training staff, and championing change within the kitchen brigade.

A key insight from Winnow was the identification of peak waste periods—particularly 10:00–10:30 AM during breakfast. This allowed the team to implement cook-to-order at this time, significantly reducing waste on items like scrambled eggs and vegetables. **“It's not just about making less food—it's about making it at the right time.”** explains Chef Ajinkya.

Actions Taken

Analysis of waste enabled smarter menu planning and better ingredient use. The team implemented a wide range of impactful strategies:

- Watermelon Portioning: Switching from cubes to wedges reduced daily waste
- Date Seed Coffee: Pitted date seeds were dried, roasted, and ground into a unique, sustainable coffee alternative.
- Stock Production: Bones and trimmings were repurposed to create rich, flavourful broths
- Ingredient Repurposing: Sautéed vegetables became side dishes; meat trimmings were used for koftas.
- No-Bin Canteen: Removing bins in the staff cafeteria reduced waste from 35kg to 5kg, simply by encouraging mindful consumption.

Inspiring the Next Generation of Chefs

Chef Ajinkya sees food waste reduction as part

of a broader mission to educate future culinary leaders. **“When I did my graduation, there was nothing called sustainability. But I wish young chefs entering the kitchen today already have that awareness.”** He now champions the inclusion of sustainability in culinary school curricula, ensuring the next generation of chefs are equipped to lead with purpose.

Future Plans

Ajinkya plans to transition the hotel’s kitchens to fully electric, induction-based, further reducing emissions. There are also plans to scale Winnow to other outlets, making food waste intelligence a property-wide standard. The transformation at NH Collection Dubai The Palm demonstrates the power of data, leadership, and culture in driving sustainability. Under Ajinkya Soundankar’s direction, and with support from Chemes and the kitchen team, Maiora evolved into a data-led, environmentally conscious operation—saving meals, cutting emissions, and improving the guest experience.

About Winnow

Winnow develops Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools to help chefs in large businesses like hotels, contract caterers, casinos, and cruise ships to run more profitable, and sustainable kitchens by cutting food waste in half.

Measuring food waste is a challenge for all commercial kitchens with up to 20% of all food purchased going to waste. Winnow offers a solution for every kitchen.

Our analytics platform and reporting suite help teams pinpoint waste quickly, allowing enterprises to drive significant waste reductions at scale.

Kitchens that use Winnow cut food waste by half on average, driving food purchasing costs down by 3%-8%, improving margins whilst doing the right thing. Winnow is deployed in over 90 countries with offices in London, Dubai, Singapore, Cluj, and Chicago.